

CLAIMS:

1. A dual function printing member usable both as a printing plate and a recording film, comprising:
  - a transparent substrate; and
  - a coating on a top side of said substrate, said coating comprising at least one layer, wherein said coating has a measured optical density of at least 3.0 both in visible and UV light and wherein the uppermost surface of said at least one layer of said coating is scratch-resistant.
2. The printing member of claim 1, wherein said coating comprises a first layer and a second layer, wherein said first layer is on top of said substrate and is a polymeric layer comprising a resin, carbon black and a UV absorbing dye and wherein said second layer is on top of said first layer, comprises amino resin and is scratch resistant.
3. The printing member of claim 2 wherein said resin in said first layer is at least one of amino and nitrocellulose resins.
4. The printing member of claim 2, wherein said first layer further comprises an infrared absorbing dye.
5. The printing member of claim 2 wherein said first layer is less than approximately 3 microns.
6. The printing member of claim 2 wherein said UV absorbing dye absorbs in the UVA region.
7. The printing member of claim 2 wherein said scratch resistant layer is comprised of polysiloxane.
8. The printing member of claim 2 wherein said scratch resistant layer further comprises a UV absorbing dye.

9. The printing member of claim 1, wherein said coating comprises a carbon-loaded layer bonded with an amino resin combined with a cross-linked hydrophilic system.

10. The printing member of claim 9, wherein said coating further comprises a UV absorbing dye.

11. The printing member of claim 9, wherein said coating further comprises an infrared absorbing dye.

12. The printing member of claim 9, wherein said coating is between approximately 0.5 and 3 microns.

13. A method of producing a dual function printing member for use as both a printing plate and a recording film, comprising:

providing a transparent base layer;

applying a coating on top of said base layer, said coating comprising at least one layer, wherein said coating has a measured optical density of at least 3.0 both in visible and UV light and wherein the uppermost of said at least one layer of said coating is scratch-resistant; and

imaging said coated base layer.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said imaged coated base layer is used for proofing.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein said coating comprises a bottom layer and a top layer, wherein said bottom layer, on top of said base layer, is a polymeric layer comprising carbon black and a UV absorbing dye and wherein said top layer, on top of said bottom layer, is a protective layer.

16. The method of claim 15 further comprising the step of treating said top layer with at least one of an oil and a grease to provide release properties.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein said coating comprises one carbon-loaded layer bonded with an amino resin combined with a cross-linked hydrophilic system.

18. A graphic tool constructed from selected members of a group of modular components said group comprising:

substrates from the group of: polyester and aluminum; and ablative coatings from the group of: carbon black, UV absorbing dye, amino resin, nitrocellulose resin and cross-linking catalysts,

wherein each tool functions as at least one of a film and a plate; and each of said tools comprises:

a substrate; and  
at least one ablative coating.

19. The modular graphic tool of claim 18 wherein said tool functions as a plate.

20. The modular graphic tool of claim 19 wherein said plate is a wet offset plate.

21. The modular graphic tool of claim 19 wherein said plate is a waterless offset plate.

22. The modular graphic tool of claim 19 wherein said tool functions as a film.

23. The modular graphic tool of claim 19 wherein said tool functions as a plate and a film
24. The graphic tool of claim 18 wherein said substrate and said at least one coating are comprised of a commonality of ingredients so as to enable economy of scale to be achieved.